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BATMAN

THE NEW ADVENTURES

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BY
STARLIN,
APARO &
DECARLO



SHE WAS JUST ANOTHER
NAMELESS VICTIM,
MURDERED FOR REASONS
YET TO BE FATHOMED.

IT WAS ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO,
IN A BACK ALLEY OF A GRIMMY
SECTION OF GOTHAM CALLED SOUTH
MEADOWS. I'D HEARD THE CALL
OVER THE CAR RADIO AND DECIDED
TO STOP BY FOR A LOOK, WONDERING
IF THIS KILLING WAS CONNECTED TO
TWO EARLIER SLASHER MURDERS.

EXACT SAME
M.O. -- MUTILATED,
LEFT IN THE DUMPSTER.

ANY IDEA
WHO SHE IS?

NONE, JUST
ANOTHER JANE
DOE IN HER
EARLY TWENTIES,
BUTCHERED AND
DISPOSED OF
LIKE A SACK
OF GARBAGE.

THIS KIND OF CRIME
HAPPENS A LOT MORE
OFTEN THAN ANYONE
WOULD LIKE TO ADMIT.

I'VE BEEN INVOLVED
WITH HUNDREDS OF
CASES LIKE IT, MAYBE
NOT AS BRUTAL, BUT
JUST AS ANONYMOUS.

VICTIMS!



I'D NEVER MET KATE
BABCOCK BEFORE THAT
NIGHT.

OF COURSE AT THAT
MOMENT, I HAD NO
IDEA THE IMPACT
SHE'D HAVE ON MY
LIFE.

TO ME SHE WAS
JUST ANOTHER
STRANGER, IN
NEED OF RESCUE.

STRANGERS ARE
ALWAYS THE EASIEST
TO DEAL WITH.

ALL I KNEW THEN WAS THAT
I HAD MORE SECONDS TO
SAVE HER AND THE CHILD.

I NEARLY
DIDN'T MAKE IT.

FORTUNATELY, KATE
HAD MORE GUTS
THAN MOST.

SHE MUST HAVE FELT CERTAIN
THAT SHE WAS FALLING TO HER
OWN DEATH.

YET SHE KEPT A TIGHT
GRIP ON THAT LITTLE
GIRL JUST THE SAME.



I WAS ABOUT TO LEAVE WHEN I SPOTTED KATE, HELPING SOME OF THE SURVIVORS OF THE BLAZE.

IT WASN'T UNTIL THEN THAT I'D NOTICED HOW STRANGELY SHE WAS DRESSED.

STHAM PUMPER
No. 2

CURIOUS...

YOU DIDN'T LIVE ACROSS THE STREET, DID YOU?

NO, I WAS JUST PASSING BY WHEN I SAW THE FIRE.

THOUGHT MAYBE I COULD HELP SOMEHOW.

YOU CERTAINLY DID THAT, SWEETIE.

YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN HER, MR. BATMAN.

POUNDING ON DOORS, TELLING PEOPLE TO GET OUT.

THEN SHE RAN BACK INSIDE, RESCUED TWO OTHER KIDS BEFORE SHE AND LIZ CINDY GOT TRAPPED ON THE ROOF.

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE, FOLLOWING.



YES, I LIKED KATE'S SPUNK.

IF ONLY SHE'D HAD MORE COMMON SENSE; HAD LISTENED TO REASON...

SO MANY IRS...

AS I PASSED THE GROUP OF ONLOOKERS THAT GATHER AT ALL FIRES, I SPOTTED A FAMILIAR FACE.

FRANK CUTLER THOMPSON, DOPE PEDDLER AND TWO-TIME LOSER.

THOUGHT ABOUT ROUSTING HIM, BUT DIDN'T.

DECIDED THE CHANCES OF HIM CARRYING WERE SLIM.

WHEN I NEXT MET KATE, IT WAS AS BRUCE WAYNE AND A WEEK LATER.

BESIDES I HAD OTHER BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO THAT NIGHT.

IT WAS A BUSINESS DINNER I COULDN'T GET OUT OF THE HOST, MORTYAN BABCOCK, OWNED A COMPANY I WAS HOPING THE WAYNE FOUNDATION COULD DO BUSINESS WITH.

HI, I'M KATE BABCOCK.

BRUCE WAYNE.

SHE WAS MORTYAN'S DAUGHTER. OF COURSE, SHE HAD NO IDEA WE'D MET BEFORE.

HER FATHER DIDN'T APPROVE OF HER WORK. THOUGHT SHE SHOULD GET MARRIED, RAISE A FAMILY.

I KNOW.

KATE TURNED OUT TO BE THE HIGH POINT OF MY EVENING. I FOUND TALKING TO HER A REAL PLEASURE.

SHE FOUND TRYING TO HELP THE POOR MORE SATISFYING-- A CONCEPT I COULD EASILY UNDERSTAND.



I DID FIND SOME OF HER ATTITUDES ABOUT LIFE A BIT ARDOR.

GROWING UP RICH DOES THAT TO YOU.

BUT ALL IN ALL, I LEFT THAT DINNER FEELING I'D JUST MADE A NEW FRIEND.

NOTHING ROMANTIC.

A FRIEND.



OVER THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WE SEEMED TO RUN INTO EACH OTHER QUITE OFTEN. SHE'D TELL ME HOW THINGS WERE GOING ON THE JOB.



WHEN YOU ASSOCIATE WITH THE KIND OF CHARACTERS I DO, IT'S A REAL TREAT TO DEAL WITH SOMEONE WHO'S DOING SOME GOOD WITH THEIR LIFE, TRYING TO HELP OUT SOMEONE OTHER THAN THEMSELVES.



BUT THEN ONE NIGHT, MAUREEN LOPEZ WAS COMING HOME LATE FROM WORK.

SHE'D JUST STOPPED BY THE ALL-NIGHT GROCERY FOR A TV DINNER AND SOME FRUIT.



THAT'S WHEN SHE SAW A YOUNG WOMAN BEING PULLED INTO A BLUE VAN.

MRS. LOPEZ COULD TELL THE SCREAMING WOMAN WASN'T GOING VOLUNTARILY.



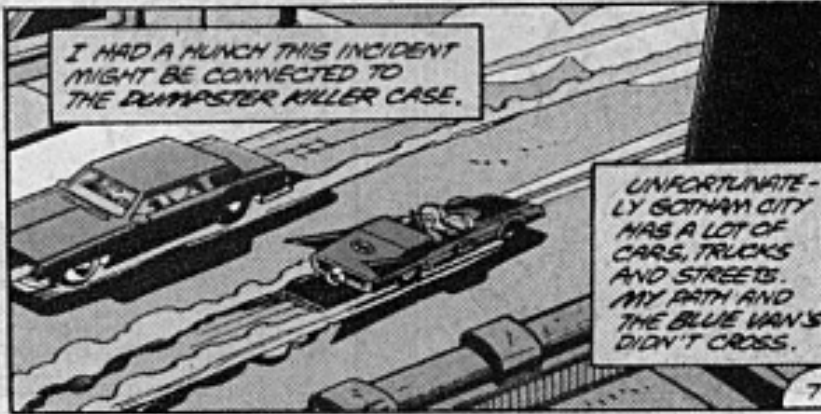
SO BEING A GOOD CITIZEN, MRS. LOPEZ REPORTED THE INCIDENT TO THE POLICE.

I HEARD THE RADIO DISPATCHER SEND A SQUAD CAR TO THE AREA TO INVESTIGATE...



... DECIDED TO JOIN IN ON THE HUNT FOR THE BLUE VAN MYSELF.

THE ABDUCTION HAD TAKEN PLACE IN THE SOUTH HEIGHTS AREA.



I HAD A HUNCH THIS INCIDENT MIGHT BE CONNECTED TO THE DUMPMSTER KILLER CASE.

UNFORTUNATELY GOTHAM CITY HAS A LOT OF CARS, TRUCKS AND STREETS. MY PATH AND THE BLUE VAN'S DIDN'T CROSS.

4:45 A.M.

I GAVE UP THE HUNT AND
WAS ABOUT TO CALL IT A
NIGHT WHEN THE CALL
CAME IN.

THERE'S
BEEN ANOTHER
DUMPER
KILLING. 27TH
STREET AND
DECKER.

BE RIGHT THERE,
COMMISSIONER.

VICTIM #4

THE MADMAN HAD
STRUCK AGAIN.

BUT THIS TIME THERE WAS
A GOOD CHANCE HE'D
BEEN SPOTTED.

THE BLUE VAN.

I WENT OVER TO EXAMINE
THE BODY, WONDERING IF
THERE'D BE ANYTHING DIFFERENT
ABOUT THIS VICTIM...

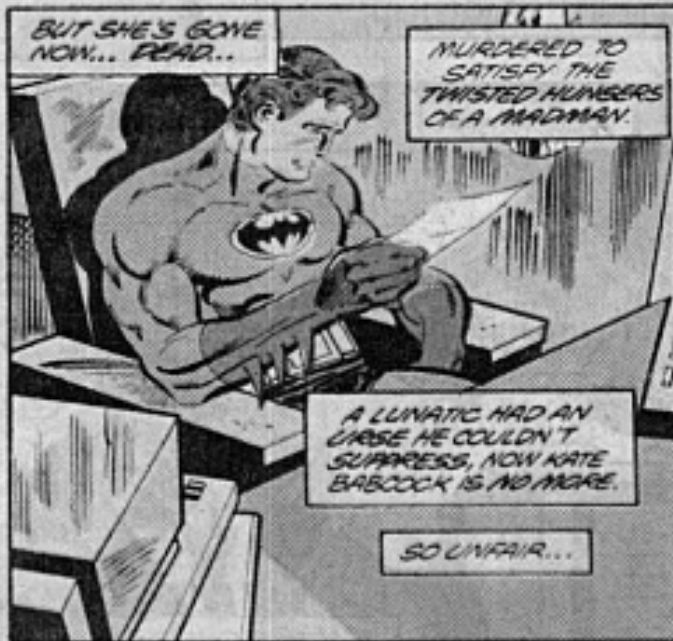
...SOMETHING
THAT MIGHT
LEAD ME TO
HER KILLER.

THERE WAS
SOMETHING
TERRIBLY
DIFFERENT
ABOUT THIS
BODY...

KATE.

BATMAN, IS
SOMETHING
WRONG?

NO...
NOTHING.



THOMPSON GOT HIS NICK-NAME BECAUSE OF HIS EXPERTISE AT EXTRACTING PURE COCAINE WITH OTHER SUBSTANCES, TO STRETCH OUT HIS SUPPLY.

THEY CALL THIS PROCESS STEPPING ON OR CUTTING THE DOPE. STILL...



...HE WAS AT THE FIRE, THE NIGHT VICTIM NUMBER 3 WAS KILLED.



IT'S A LONG SHOT, BUT...



...WORTH A FEW HOURS OF INVESTIGATION.



I MADE MY WAY THROUGH CUTTER'S LIST OF KNOWN ASSOCIATES.

THEY WERE ALL WILLING TO TALK TO ME, EVENTUALLY. UNFORTUNATELY NONE OF THEM HAD ANYTHING ALL THAT INTERESTING TO SAY.

CUTTER HAD NO HISTORY OF EXCESSIVELY VIOLENT BEHAVIOR...

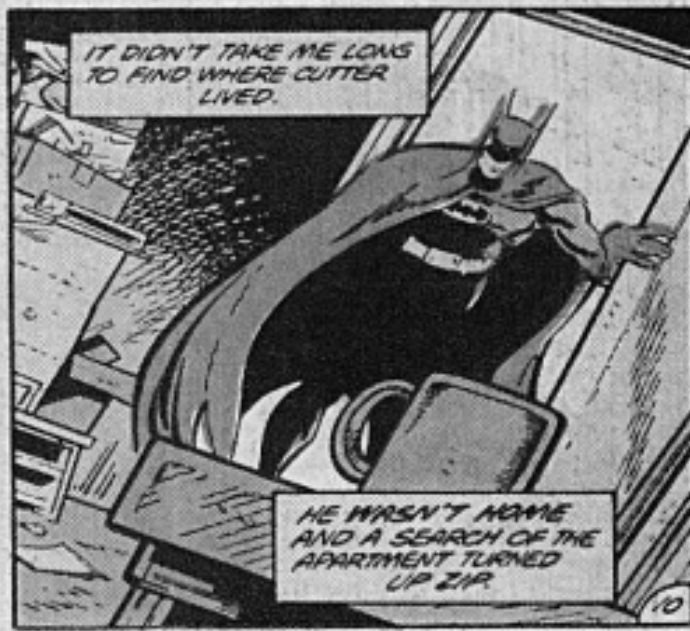


NOR DID ANYONE EVER REMEMBER HIM USING A RIFLE. CUTTER LIKED GUNS. HE JUST DIDN'T FIT THE PROFILE.

BUT I DECIDED NOT TO GIVE UP ON CUTTER JUST YET.



I HAD THIS FEELING...



IT DIDN'T TAKE ME LONG TO FIND WHERE CUTTER LIVED.

HE WASN'T HOME AND A SEARCH OF THE APARTMENT TURNED UP ZIP.



I WAS ABOUT TO GIVE UP ON CUTTER, BUT I THOUGHT OF ONE LAST LEAD TO CHECK OUT.

I TAPPED INTO THE DEPT. OF MOTOR VEHICLES' COMPUTER RECORDS.



THE DMV HAD A BLUE DODGE VAN REGISTERED TO ONE FRANK THOMPSON.



AT LAST, I HAD THE LEAD I WANTED.

THE ONLY TROUBLE WAS, I COULDN'T LOCATE CUTTER.

IT WAS AS IF HE'D DROPPED OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH.



DAYS TURNED INTO WEEKS, YET I FOUND NO TRACE OF MY PREY.

I BEGAN TO THINK CUTTER MAY HAVE LEFT TOWN.



I DIDN'T LIKE THAT IDEA.

HE HAD TO STILL BE IN GOTHAM... STILL WITHIN MY REACH.



THEN ONE DAY, I WAS VISITING COMMISSIONER GORDON.

SEE YOU TOMORROW.

THE GUY'S ALL SET FOR AT THE WAREHOUSE, TONIGHT.



CUTTER SHOWS UP WITH THE NOSE CANDY AND WE ~~BUST~~ HIM. COULDN'T BE SIMPLER.



WOULD YOU GENTLEMEN LIKE A LITTLE ADDITIONAL BACKUP THIS EVENING?



I SPENT THE EARLY EVENING
CRUISING SOUTH NEIGHBORS.
ALL OF THE DUMPSTER VICTIMS
HAD COME FROM THIS AREA.

I DIDN'T WANT
CUTLER TO DISPOSE
OF WOMAN NUMBER
5 BEFORE HE MET
WITH THE UNDERCOVER
COPS.



THE RED VAN AND I HAD
ALREADY PASSED EACH
OTHER THREE TIMES
TONIGHT.

WHEN I SPOTTED IT THE
FOURTH TIME, I DECIDED
TO CHECK IT OUT.



I KNOW,
I WAS
SUPPOSED TO BE ON
THE LOOK-
OUT FOR
A BLUE
VAN.

BUT THE STEP
FROM BLUE TO
RED ONLY TAKES
A FAINT JOB.



I WAS ABOUT TO
PULL THE TRUCK
OVER WHEN I
HEARD THE GUN-
SHOT.

K-TOW



THEIR
TIMING
COULDN'T
HAVE
BEEN
WORSE.

TWO LOSERS
KNOCKING OFF
A LIQUOR STORE.



THEY DIDN'T EVEN HAVE THE
SENSE TO LOOK WHERE
THEY WERE GOING.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE FOLLOWING



TAKING CARE OF
THOSE TWO JERKS
DIDN'T TAKE LONG.
DIDN'T EVEN WORK
UP A SWEAT.

UNFORTUNATELY, BY THE TIME
THE PATROLCAR ARRIVED TO
PICK THEM UP, IT WAS
NEARLY MIDNIGHT.

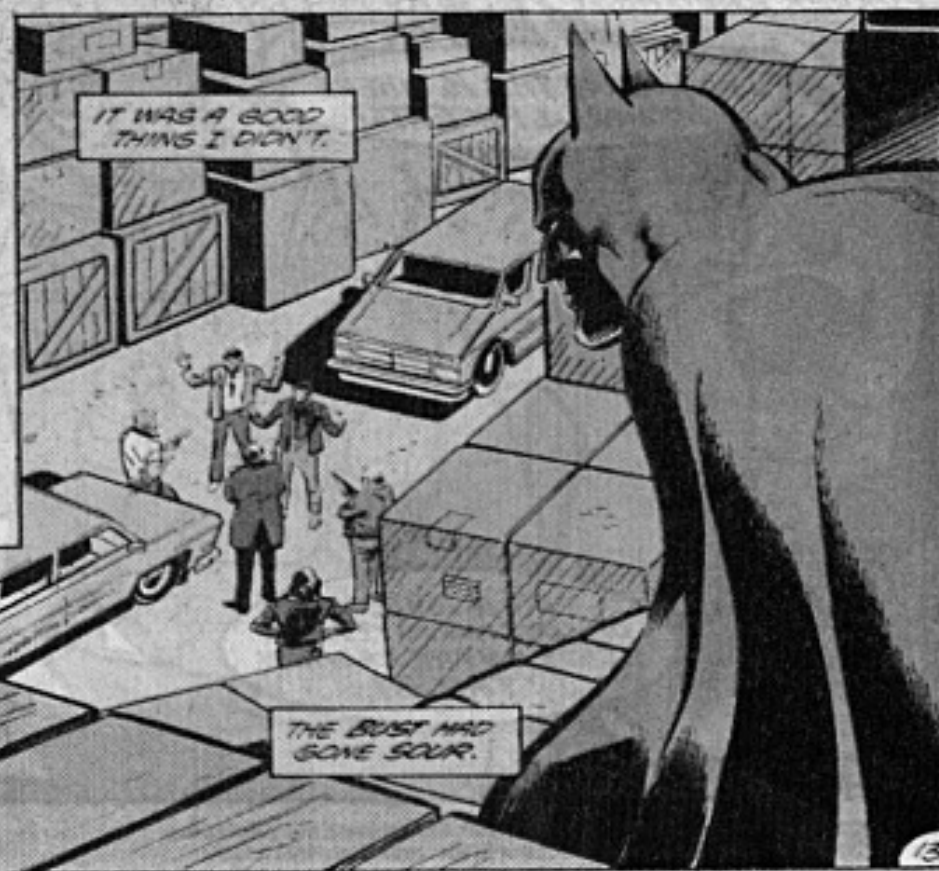


THIS WAS ONE APPOINTMENT
I DIDN'T WANT TO BE LATE FOR.



I CAME IN THROUGH
A SECOND STORY
WINDOW.

DIDN'T SEE ANY
REASON TO
ADVERTISE MY
PRESENCE.



IT WAS A GOOD
THING I DIDN'T.

THE BUST HAD
GONE SOUR.

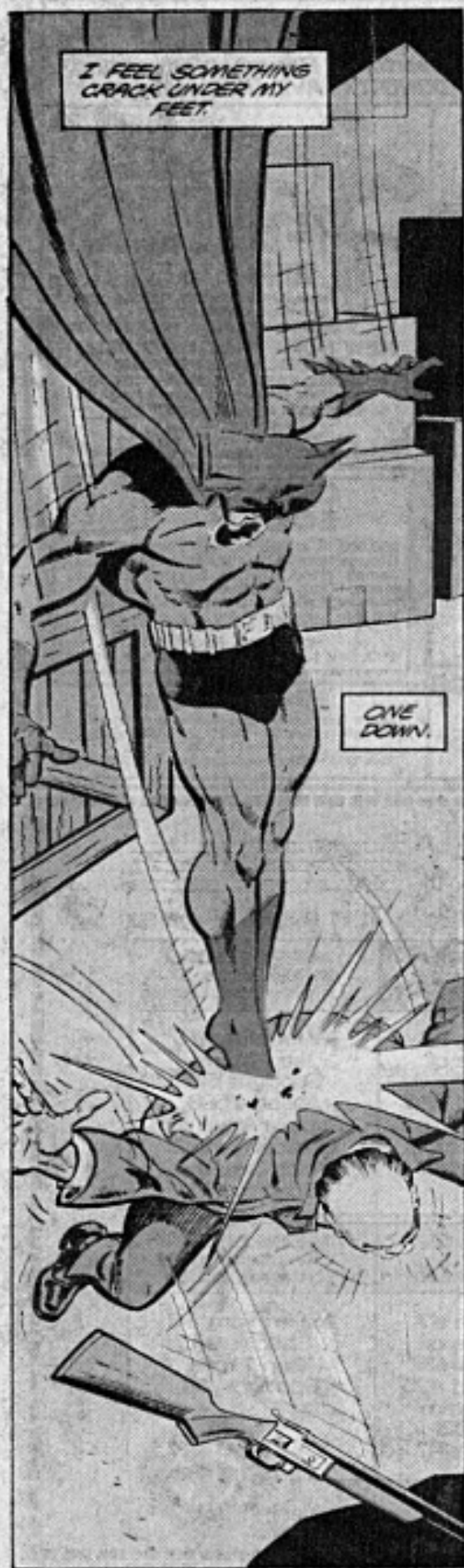




THE SIGHT OF THE KNIFE
SNAPPED SOMETHING
INSIDE ME.

I MADE MY MOVE EVEN BEFORE
I CONSCIOUSLY DECIDED TO DO SO.

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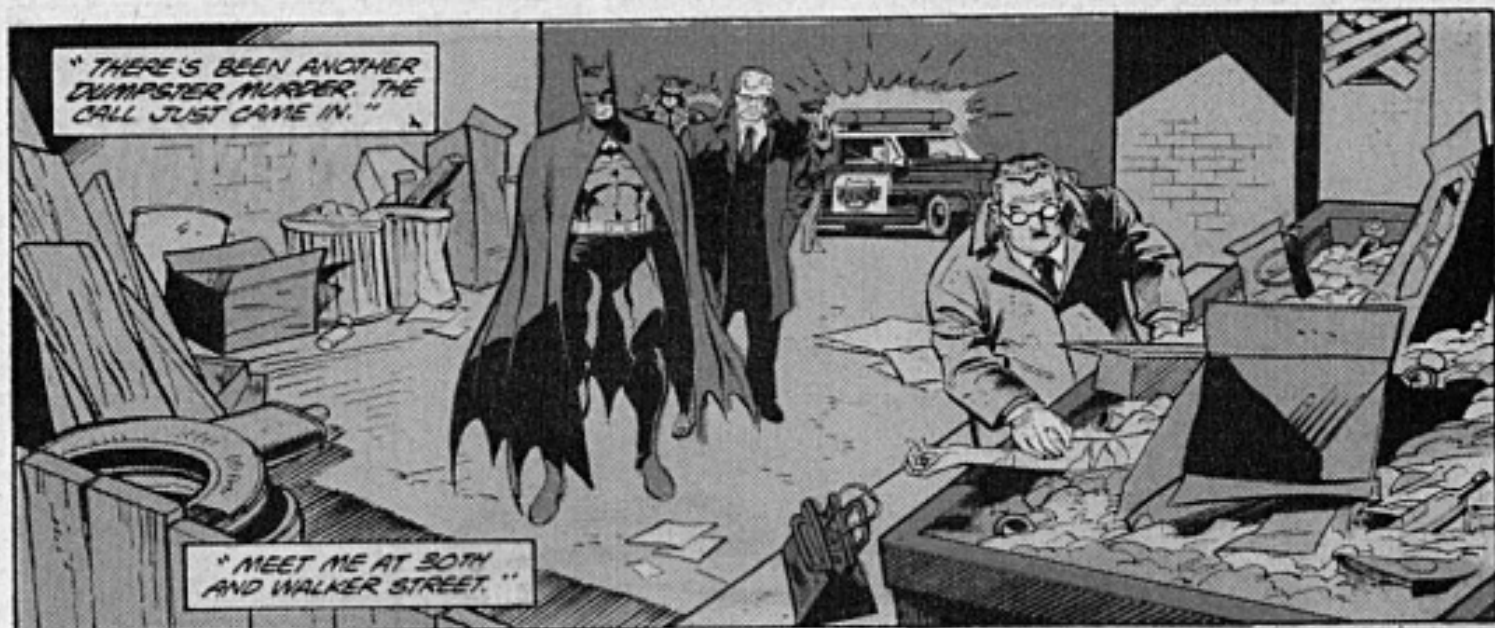












NOTHING TO BE DONE.
I'D BLOWN THE CASE.

I ALLOWED MY FEELINGS
TO CLOUD MY JUDG-
MENTS, MADE STUPID
LEAPS IN LOGIC, AND
CAME UP WITH THE
WRONG ANSWERS.

...NOW A
FIFTH
WOMAN
IS DEAD.

MY FAULT...

BUT IT'S NOT
OVER YET!

THAT
BUTCHER'S STILL
OUT THERE AND
HE'LL TRY TO
STRIKE AGAIN.

HOPEFULLY,
HIS SUCCESS
WILL MAKE
HIM CARELESS.

ALL I NEED
IS ONE
MISTAKE ON
HIS PART AND
HE'S MINE.

MY FIXATION
WITH CUTLER
BLINDED ME
TO OTHER
POSSIBILITIES.

I SAW THE RED VAN,
SHOULD HAVE CHECKED
IT OUT EARLIER, DIDN'T...

I'LL FIND HIM YET.

I SWEAR I WILL, KATE.

JIM STARLIN
WRITER

JIM APPARO
PENCILLER

MIKE DE CARLO
INKER

JOHN COSTANZA
LETTERER

ADRIENNE ROY
COLORIST

DENNY O'NEIL
EDITOR



Dear Denny,

I was looking forward to seeing Dave Cockrum's artwork on BATMAN. I really wasn't sure what to expect, especially when I learned that Mike DeCarlo was to be the inker. Having read issue #410, and spending some time looking at the art, I can say that this new team might just be the right one. The finished art is more DeCarlo than Cockrum at first glance, but Dave's influence is there if one looks for it. It isn't what the dedicated Futurians fan might expect, but that is probably for the good. The more I study it, the more I like it. Robin is delightfully drawn—as cute and impish as Alan Davis' version was. I just hope that the Mazzucchelli fans will give this vastly different style a fair chance to win them over.

Storywise, "Two of a Kind" did a lot to make me forgive DC for taking a highly satisfactory Doug Moench off BATMAN. Max Collins showed here a better grasp of the characters than in his previous stories, perhaps because he had the opportunity to work with Batman and Robin as a unit at last. I couldn't help comparing the development of the new, new Robin with Doug's version of events, and, while I had no complaints with latter, Max has come up with an equally pleasing approach. Perhaps there was a lack of detail in the opening sequence, I would have liked to have seen Jason's development from street punk to crime fighter in closer detail. He seems to have matured a little too quickly. Still, there is time for Max to delve deeper into this aspect in future issues. There were some really nice touches in the story, such as Alfred's admonition regarding Batman's emphasis on the first Robin and presenting Jason with Dick Grayson's costume. Now, of course, I am eager to see a meeting between Jason and Dick and I hope that it will be as emotional moment as it was the first time around.

Two-Face was handled very well. Max has made him a little more unpredictable than in former incarnations, or so it seemed from this episode. The connection with Jason's father lends a touch more immediacy to Dent and next issue should prove interesting.

All the best,
Dale Coe
56 Whitecross Road
Warrington
Cheshire, WA5 1LR
ENGLAND

Dear Bat-People,

About BATMAN #410 I'd just like to

say, "Wow!" I'd leave it at that but it's just not in my nature to do so. #410 is without a doubt the best post-YEAR ONE story yet. The recent retelling of the Batman story involving both of his DC titles has been some of the best comic art and writing ever.

BATMAN #410 was so good, because it gave us a good look at Batman and his new Robin, without getting caught up in self-introspection. It showed development of Jason Todd from being a street kid into someone that could be a real contributor. It also provided an introduction to one of the classic Batman villains, Two-Face. He is a good Batman villain because of his maniacal obsessions. Other types of villains will work with Batman, but the dangerous insane type, with some sort of compulsion, is always the best bet to become a classic Batman challenger. So let's see more of Two-Face, as well as the Joker, Penguin, the Riddler, Mad Hatter et al.

The ending of #410 sets up the next adventure rather well. Robin's involvement should prove interesting. While growing up and reading BATMAN comics, Robin's involvement was usually enjoyable. Will there be an eventual return to a trend that seemed to be starting before YEAR ONE? That is, while Robin may appear in BATMAN, for the most part his adventures with Batman would be in DETECTIVE COMICS while Batman goes "solo" in his own title?

Stephen Cade
4831-49 Avenue, NW
Calgary, Alberta

There really isn't a set pattern to Robin's appearances, Stephen. For the time being, you can look for him to appear in either title as the story may warrant. This issue was a good example of that theory.

Sirs,

Now that Batman's identity has been firmly established (I hope), another issue must be addressed: his wheels.

Y'see, while Bruce Wayne's Lamborghini may fit his playboy image, it is altogether improper for Bats. First, his car should be open, so as to allow his cape to flow out. Second, the Lambo is just such a juvenile car! Let me suggest something a little more mature, something from the Dark Knight's. I mean Batman's heyday...the 1960's.

The car is a Ford Shelby Cobra, the one that beat Ferrari. A 1962 model could bridge the gap from 0-60 in 4.2 seconds, about a second faster than the charging bull. The car was originally available

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with Ford's reputable 289 c.i. But then by the mid-1960's, the competition (read: Corvettes) started to catch up. So Ford developed an engine so powerful, so infamous, so full of anger as to approach the reputation of the Batman: the 428 Cobra Jet.

Both the engine and the car were consigned to history by the gas and insurance crises of the early 1970's, about the same time the Batman's rep fell. Now a fully certified replica of the Snake is available, notably with Ford's modern killer engine, the Mustang 302.

Enough of the techie stuff. The car is mean. Mean enough to warrant the purchase of a brace by the frivolous Wayne. Think of the potential, Bruce. The wind blowing back your cape, an antisocial 428 under your right foot and anybody else's car behind you. You could even paint a bat on the hood.

Sincerely,
Ben Rothfeld
Millburn, NJ

P.S.: If you need someone to take care of it...

Thanks for the info, Ben. As you're reading this, I'm sure that fellow car enthusiast and cover sketch artist Ed Hannigan and I will be trying to find this car of yours! But, speaking as the proud new owner of a Honda Accord LXI Hatchback, I still wouldn't classify a "Lambo" as a juvenile car. I mean, if you could have one—would you really turn it down? Nah...I didn't think so.

Dear Bat-People,

I have really enjoyed both of Batman's titles, but BATMAN #410 was beyond your usual creative genius. This is how Batman should be. The new origin of Robin/Jason Todd is definitely a move in the right direction. Although I can see why Batman needs a Robin, keep some element of realism when using him. He will obviously make some mistakes as he lacks Batman's (and the original Robin's) experience.

Concerning this issue, as expected Batman compares Dick to Jason. Jason's father was possibly killed by Two-Face? Jason wouldn't do anything stupid like trying to catch Two-Face on his own, would he?

Awaiting next issue,
Kevin Zawicki
5454 S. 25th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53221

P.S.: Drop the yellow background on the emblem!

Well, as we saw in issue #411, Jason

didn't strike out on his own but that still didn't stop him from having a natural, vengeful outburst...

Dear Editors,

In response to Leonard Kirk's comment on rabies shots in the letter column of *BATMAN* #110...well, I have had rabies shots, two years ago, and I certainly had trouble sitting down afterwards. You see, the business of getting shots in the stomach which Mr. Kirk refers to is no longer used. A less bothersome, shorter series of shots was put into service about four years ago. While one gets the smaller number of shots in the arm now, the person getting the shots must first be injected with a large quantity of preparation fluid (Gamma Globulin, I think) to prepare his or her system for the rabies vaccine. The Globulin is usually injected, as it was in my case, in the buttocks region. Four large needles of the stuff left me sleeping on my stomach that night, and I can back up the validity of Mr. Miller's rabies shot "joke."

Thanks for your time
Jonathan Stover
R.R. #2
Tillsonburg
Ontario, CANADA
N4G 4G7

Boy! First you guys get an automotive history lesson, and now we're all off to Med School. Who says reading the letter column isn't a mind expanding experience!!

Dear Denny,

Keep the awful, little, yellow oval. It doesn't stink.

Dace McDowell
1120 Collinsville Rd.
Suisun, CA 94585

There's nothing like real from-the-heart emotional support, eh gang?

Now, it's off to the Den...

—Jonathan

FROM THE DEN

Look out the window. Beautiful summer day. Temperature in the high 80s. Low humidity, sunshine you could spread on toast. Below my office window, Fifth Avenue is thronged with some of the most beautiful people on Earth and Central Park is just three minutes' walk away.

And here am I, stuck inside, editing comic books.

A lot of you may think this is a snap of a job. Sitting around all day putting out funny books—what could be bad? Well, listen, this past week has been a brute. We've all been here past six every night trying to get far enough ahead so we can go to some of the big summer conventions, and, worse, trying to coordinate all the forthcoming Millennium crossovers—a horrendously complex and demanding task. Did I say past six? Make it seven, eight, even nine. Weekends? They don't exist for the duration. We've got scripts to take home and read and those of us who contribute writing or drawing have that to do.

Did I mention annuals? Lot of those to get out in the next few weeks, too.

I talk to editors of other kinds of publications and they don't believe me when I say the average comic book editor meets between five and ten deadlines every month (except during the summer when it may be even more) and supervises at least five creative people *per story*.

During the winter it's demanding. During the summer—?

Summer and comics. I remember endless July afternoons sprawled on somebody's front porch with a few buddies surrounded by a couple of comic book collections. I didn't know, then, so many decades ago, how pleasant those afternoons were: good friends, no real problems, long, warm days that seemed to stretch into infinity and, not least, the flavoring of fun and fantasy the comics provided. Of course, we read comics during the winter, too—what do you think we were, Philistines?—but they were somehow *better* during the vacation months—a part of a whole that included sunshine, shade, the smell of new-mown grass, lemonade, *fun*.

So I don't really mind being stuck in this office today. It seems to me that providing flavor to someone's pleasant summer afternoon is a nice thing to do. Worth a little sacrifice on my part.

Besides, I could be stuck inside doing something that's boring.

Denny

ONE OF THESE PEOPLE HAS WAITED 1000 YEARS TO BETRAY US!



Captain Atom



Black Canary



Rocket Red #7

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